

From: Hector Pereira
To: Microsoft ATR,novalug@tux.org@inetgw
Date: 11/24/01 12:47pm
Subject: microsoft settlement

Dear Sir/Madam:

With this email I want to support the suggestion of Linux vendor Red Hat about the remedy for Microsoft's monopolistic practices that they have been convicted of: at least exclude Microsoft's software from the price tag of the punishment.

The originally proposed settlement, wherein Microsoft would supply computers and its own software to schools otherwise too poor to afford them, is a clever ploy to wiggle out from under paying a painful price for its actions. To Microsoft it costs virtually nothing to make copies of its own software. To include the market value of the software, therefore, increases the stated price of the deal to a seemingly reasonable level, while the real cost, excluding the software, is very minimal.

A similar problem always occurs with large class action suits, where the members of the class typically receive rebates on the Company's products, coupons for free upgrades, and similar freebees. In these cases the lawyers' fees are based on the stated value of the deal, so the only ones who receive real money are the lawyers. The customers get nothing, basically, a bunch of worthless coupons.

The present case is different, since the lawyers on both sides are paid for by their own parties. Still, the principle is the same: any remedy should give real value to the aggrieved party. In Microsoft's case this is the general public, including someone like myself: specifically, I can not find a simple laptop computer without being forced to pay for Microsoft software, while I want one that has linux pre-installed.

I applaud RedHad in its willingness to supply free software as part of the Microsoft deal.

Sincerely,

Nino R. Pereira